

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01 SAJ-01 OIC-04 NIC-01 /173 W

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R 071320Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0266

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, GW

SUBJECT: GERMAN EMPLOYERS DELEGATE ASSESSES THE ILO
EUROPEAN REGIONAL AND EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCES

REF: BONN L424

1. EMBASSY LABATT RECENTLY VISITED DR. ERNST GERHARD ERDMANN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE FEDERAL CONFEDERATION OF GERMAN EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATIONS (BUNDESVEREINIGUNG DER DEUTSCHEN ARBEITGEBERVERBAENDE - BDA) TO DISCUSS THE RECENT ILO EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE AND THE EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE HELD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE ILO REGIONAL CONFERENCE.

2. DR. ERDMANN WHO WAS THE CONFERENCE VICE CHAIRMAN SAID THAT THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE WAS HELD WITHOUT THE POLITICAL CONFLICT WHICH CHARACTERIZED THE ILO CONFERENCE LAST JUNE. THE PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE WAS DUE IN PART TO THE OBVIOUS ATTEMPT BY THE SOVIETS AND EAST EUROPEANS TO BE COOPERATIVE. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE WESTERN EUROPEAN DELEGATES WERE DETERMINED TO AVOID A REPETITION OF THE POLITICAL CONFLICT WHICH THEY FOUND SO SHOCKING AT THE LAST ILO CONFERENCE. ANOTHER POTENTIAL SOURCE OF CONFLICT WAS A POSSIBLE COALITION OF EAST-WEST LABOR AND GOVERNMENT FORCES, ALIGNED AGAINST THE EMPLOYER GROUP. WESTERN EUROPEAN EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES FEARED THIS POSSIBLE TACTIC IN LIGHT OF THE EXTENSIVE EAST-WEST LABOR EXCHANGES DURING THE PAST YEAR, BUT THE COALITION DID NOT DEVELOP. THE ATTEMPTS OF THE SOVIET WORKER DELEGATE TO PASS RESOLUTIONS CRITICAL OF SPAIN AND GREECE WERE MODIFIED AND "SPAIN" AND "GREECE" WERE REMOVED FROM THE TEXT OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS.

3. DR. ERDMANN FELT THAT ALTHOUGH RESOLUTIONS DEALING WITH TECHNICAL LABOR ISSUES WERE DRAFTED AND PASSED WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LITTLE DIFFICULTY, THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS DID NOT JUSTIFY THE SPECIAL EFFORT TO HOLD THE CONFERENCE.

4. ON THE EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE, DR. ERDMANN SAID THAT THE DGB AND OTHER WESTERN UNIONS SUCCESSFULLY BLOCKED AGREEMENT BETWEEN EAST AND WEST ON THE SPECIFIC WFTU OBJECTIVES, FORMULATED AT THE RECENT CONFERENCE IN VARNA. FOR EXAMPLE, THE DGB DELEGATE CONSCIOUSLY

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AVOIDED JOINT ACTION WITH COMMUNIST LABOR DELEGATES TO SECURE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT OF THE DGB CAMPAIGN WITHIN THE FRG TO RESTRICT EMPLOYER RIGHTS TO USE LOCKOUTS DURING STRIKES AND LABOR DISPUTES. HE SAID THAT ONE OF THE DANGERS OF EAST-WEST LABOR CONFERENCES IS THAT SUCH CONTACTS FOSTER A DOUBLE STANDARD IN THE ILO TOWARD GOVERNMENTS AND TRADE UNIONS OF THE NON-DEMOCRATIC REGIMES OF THE WEST ON THE ONE HAND AND THE GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED LABOR ORGANIZATIONS IN THE EAST ON THE OTHER. HE FELT THAT THE FACT THAT THE EAST-WEST TRADE UNION MEETING DID TAKE PLACE REPRESENTED A TACTICAL VICTORY FOR THE SOVIETS.

5. DR. ERDMANN SAID THAT THERE WERE REPORTS THAT WFTU SECRETARY GENERAL PIERRE GENSOUS ATTENDED THE EAST-WEST TRADE UNION MEETING BUT THAT ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY OTTO KERSTEN DID NOT.

6. COMMENT. FROM OTHER SOURCES, WE HAVE HEARD THAT KERSTEN, GENSOUS AND A TOP REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WCL MET IN GENEVA, AND THE THREE LABOR LEADERS AGREED NOT TO ATTEND THE EAST-WEST MEETING, BUT GENSOUS ATTENDED ANYWAY.

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CMMW I :- END COMMENT.
HILLENBRAND

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